

## MBChB WITHDRAWAL GUIDANCE

Some students may benefit from taking a break to focus on difficult health and/or personal circumstances. Occasionally students will be unsure about medicine as a career and may wish to explore other career options. This guidance outlines the support available, the procedure for withdrawing and one student's experience of taking a break from medicine.

## Support & Advice

There are many reasons why you may need to explore taking time out of medicine. Whatever the reason, the University and School can offer support and advice.

- MBChB students are encouraged to keep in regular contact with their **Adviser of Studies** who are allocated to each student throughout their studies. You can find your Adviser of Studies contact details on your MyCampus record or e-mail [med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk)
- **Medical Student Support Team** ([med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk)) can offer you advice, support and information on a wide range of issues including finance, disability, issues relating to your general welfare and support for all MBChB students
- **Medical Peer Support Group** ([www.facebook.com/glasmedpeersupport/?ref=aymt\\_homepage\\_panel](https://www.facebook.com/glasmedpeersupport/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel)) are trained medical students who are on-hand to listen and support
- **Careers Service** ([www.gla.ac.uk/services/careers/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/careers/)) Available to all students with a specific medicine adviser and a resource centre
- **Chaplaincy** ([www.gla.ac.uk/services/chaplaincy/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/chaplaincy/)) Open to students and staff of all faiths (or non-faith) and offers representation of the main faith communities on campus
- **Counselling & Psychological Services** ([www.gla.ac.uk/services/counselling/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/counselling/)) operates a counselling service for students as well as a consultation service for parents, friends and University staff
- **Disability Service** ([www.gla.ac.uk/services/disability/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/disability/)) The first point of contact for any student or potential student who has a disability
- **Student Learning Service** ([www.gla.ac.uk/services/sls/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/sls/)) Offers a range of services to help you adjust to the methods of teaching at University
- **Student Services Enquiry Team** ([www.gla.ac.uk/students/sset/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/students/sset/)) Help with queries on all student services and provide advice on finding specific information and resources
- **Maternity/Paternity/Adoption support**  
[www.gla.ac.uk/services/senateoffice/policies/studentssupport/maternitypolicy/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/senateoffice/policies/studentssupport/maternitypolicy/)

Further Support Services can be found at: [www.gla.ac.uk/studentlife/support/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/studentlife/support/)

## Temporary withdrawal process

There may be times during your university career when you experience difficulties and may wish to temporarily withdraw for one academic year or the remainder of the academic year. In order to take time out from the MBChB, you must complete the following steps:

1) Meet with Dr Angela Cogan, Head of Student Support ([med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk)) and your Year Director. A satisfactory GP/health professional letter is required to support your withdrawal. You are strongly encouraged to meet with the career's adviser for medicine at this stage [www.gla.ac.uk/services/careers/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/careers/)

2) You may be referred to Occupational Health for support and/or an assessment

3) Formally request withdrawal by contacting Dr John Paul Leach, Head of Undergraduate Medical School (c/o [med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk)) briefly outlining the reasons for wanting to withdraw

4) If approval received, withdraw yourself on MyCampus [www.gla.ac.uk/services/registry/withdrawal/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/registry/withdrawal/)

**Please clearly indicate on your online withdrawal form that you may return in future. There is a section on the online withdrawal form where a note of intention to return should be recorded, if this is not recorded, this may affect any future funding. If you are unsure, it is best to state you may return.**

## Permanent withdrawal process

**Please follow the above steps 1-4**

If you have successfully completed a minimum of one academic year, you will be eligible to receive an exit award:

- Degree of Bachelor of Medical Science - successfully completed the first three years of the MBChB programme
- Diploma of Higher Education (Medical Science) - successfully completed the first two years of the MBChB programme
- Certificate of Higher Education (Medical Science) - successfully completed the first year of the MBChB programme

For full exit award conditions please see section 6.8 of the MVLS University Calendar [www.gla.ac.uk/media/media\\_477758\\_en.pdf](http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_477758_en.pdf)

Please get in touch with the Medical Student Support Team to process your exit award [med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk)

## Returning to Medicine

During your time out, the Student Support Administrator will get in touch with you. Make sure that the Medical School has your up-to-date postal address and email address. The purpose of this contact is to ensure that you are ready and fit to return and then to make arrangements with you for this. If you haven't heard by the beginning of June, or have any questions while off, please get in touch with [med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk)

## Unsure about Medicine?

It may be that before and/or during your time out, you are unsure about medicine, or your ability to continue on the programme. Many previous students of medicine have gone on to successfully achieve other degrees or career options. There is support available through the Careers Service, your Adviser of Studies, Occupational Health and [med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk)

## One student's view

Given that most students need time out to focus on their health or personal circumstances, the School does not organise or encourage a full study programme while students are out of MBChB. However, we appreciated that getting back into the mind-set of study can be difficult – this guidance features one student's perspective on their period of time out. Please contact [med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:med-sch-welfare@glasgow.ac.uk) if you need support or advice at any time.

*Taking time out from university can be quite distressing especially as your peers are still continuing in study. It is not easy to come to terms with the fact that it has become 'too much' to cope with, due to illness or a change in circumstances. A year can seem like a very long time when you are not studying so I found it helpful to try and establish a daily routine in order to keep busy and stay positive about returning to university. It can be a drastic change, going from being very busy studying or out on placement to having essentially not much to do. While a rest is good and often well needed, I think it has been equally as important to keep busy and keep a foot in medicine. This does not mean spending hours in the library every day, but I have found that doing some light study has been helpful. It is amazing how much more you can learn when in a relaxed manner. Having worked throughout university I have found this helpful not only financially but it also helps establish a routine. During my year out I increased my hours of work and found more work within a GP practice, which hasn't been too stressful, it keeps me occupied during the day while remaining in the medical field. Seeing patients on a day to day basis is a constant reminder of why I want to practice medicine, while gaining advice from members of the practice and additional help with clinical examination etc.*

*There is a tendency to want to keep a low profile during a break in study; however I have found it beneficial to stay in touch with my friends within the year group. I hope that this will help me feel less alienated on my return to university. It is nice to see how friends are progressing and of course, they have plenty of advice to offer! Maintaining good relations with peers can sometimes seem upsetting and stressful but it is important to realise that you are not the first, and certainly won't be the last person to take some time out from the course. It is demanding, it is hard work, and everyone struggles at one point or another but it is crucial to find a way of dealing with this pressure prior to returning to the course. Finding a way to relax or switch off is helpful and I have found that exercise has been beneficial. The break in study has given me the time to incorporate this into my daily routine, and I will aim to continue this when I return to university.*

*As the time approaches to return from a break in study I think it is good to continue with light reading of subjects and maybe spending a little bit longer on the subjects that you may find more difficult than others. Looking over previous coursework and notes is useful and I have found that completing past paper questions issued from the university is also an effective revision tool as it highlights areas where more studying may be required and also can help give an indication of what depth of knowledge is required on certain subjects where you may be unsure.*

*Planning areas of study in advance can be helpful but it is important to realise that your goals should be realistic to avoid feeling overwhelmed with the volume of learning involved in the course.*

### **A structured learning log is one way**

*A structured learning log or portfolio can help you in refreshing the knowledge already gained and preparing for the studying that is ahead. If you took time out part way through an academic year you will re-enter at the start of the year you left. In this case you might focus on refreshing the coursework material you attended before you took time out.*

For example, the core material in a block of study can be represented in a log as:

'Block X:

1. What do you perceive as your gaps in knowledge and understanding in this block? (You may wish to reflect on feedback – from the Year Director after your last exam, from PBL facilitators, from coursework markers' comments, or from your own OSCE results.) List these gaps.

2. How will you address these perceived gaps? (You may choose to do this by reading course/PBL notes, and looking at specific texts and resources). List these below.

3. Now plan to address these gaps. For each area, record what you have learned as a result of your targeted study. Use the pro-forma below.'

### **Learning Log**

Complete one line for each activity or learning event e.g. lecture or lab.

<i>Date and Event/Activity</i>	<i>Learning Outcomes (Los) as described in lecture notes, handouts, web material</i>	<i>How I am going to achieve Los e.g. read and annotate lecture slides handout, read and make notes on a book chapter</i>	<i>Date Los achieved</i>

Note: this is one example of several tools you can use to cover the gaps in learning opportunities.

Please contact the Student Learning Service for further advice

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/sls/contactus/>